

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Carreira, S. 2006. *Calamodontophis, C. paucidens*.

***Calamodontophis* Amaral**

Calamodon Amaral 1935:203. Type-species: *Calamodon paucidens* Amaral 1935:204, by original designation and monotypy.

Calamodontophis Amaral 1963:580. Replacement name for preoccupied *Calamodon* Cope 1875.

• **CONTENT.** One species, *Calamodontophis paucidens*, is recognized.

• **DEFINITION and DIAGNOSIS.** *Calamodontophis* is a small snake, with a maximum SVL of 361 mm (range 125–361 mm). Dorsally, the body is pale brown with small dark and yellow spots between scales (better exhibited when specimens show defensive behaviors; the pattern is reticulated in these instances) with immaculate head. The oral mucosa is dark. The immaculate venter is yellowish. Ontogenetic color and pattern variation are not present. Dorsal scales are smooth and in 15–15–15 rows, with one apical pit. Ventrals number 124–147, subcaudals 29–39 in two rows, and the cloacal plate is divided. Head scales include a single preocular (sometimes 2), two postoculars (rarely 3), and no loreal. Supralabials number 7 (3rd and 4th in contact with orbit), rarely 6 on one side (rarely 2nd, 3rd, and 4th in contact with orbit), and infralabials 7–8 (first 4 in contact with anterior pair of chinshields), rarely 6. Each nostril lies within a single scale. Temporals are usually 1+2, but occasionally 1+1 (Franco et al. 2001, Carreira and Meneghel 2003). The tail is relatively short, 1/7 to 1/9 of total length, with sexual dimorphism in both length and number of subcaudals. Maxillary teeth anterior to diastema number 7, followed by 2 slightly longer teeth; mandibular teeth 16, decreasing in length posteriorly; palatine teeth 6 and pterygoid teeth fewer than 10 (Bailey 1966; Franco 1999 reported 15 pterygoid teeth).

Amaral (1935) reported the smaller diameter of the cervical and cephalic regions compared to the rest of the body as distinguishing the genus from *Tomodon* Duméril and Bibron 1853. Bailey (1966) mentioned that *Tomodon dorsatus* Duméril, Bibron, and Duméril 1854, was the only other snake with a dark mouth lining known to him. In addition, *Calamodontophis* lacks the strongly oblique dorsal scales of *Tomodon*.

• **DESCRIPTIONS, ILLUSTRATIONS, DISTRIBUTION, FOSSIL RECORD AND PERTINENT LITERATURE.** See species account.

• **REMARKS.** Amaral (1935) suggested a phylogenetic relationship of *Calamodontophis* with *Dryophylax* (= *Philodryas*), *Tachymenis*, *Conophis*, and *Tomodon*. Bailey (1966) identified *Calamodontophis*, *Tachymenis*, *Thamnodynastes*, *Tomodon*, *Ptychophis*, *Gomesophis*, and *Pseudotomodon* as comprising



Figure 1. *Calamodontophis paucidens*, Colección Zoología Vertebrados, Reptiles - Facultad de Ciencias, Montevideo (ZVC-R) 5500, Ruta 98, 10 km W. Isla Patrulla, 34° 56' 07" S, 54° 26' 25" W, Dpto. Trienta y Tres, Uruguay. Photograph by the author.

ing a probable suprageneric group. Franco (1999) placed *Tomodon* Duméril and Bibron 1853, *Pseudotomodon* Koslowsky 1896, and *Calamodontophis* Amaral 1963, in the synonymy of *Tachymenis* Wiegmann 1834. Zaher (1999) included *Calamodontophis* as *incertae sedis* in the Dipsadinae.

• **ETYMOLOGY.** The name *Calamodontophis* is derived from the Latin word "calamus" (reed or straw), "odont" (a tooth) and the Greek word *OPHIS* (snake), probably in reference to the elongate, slender posterior maxillary teeth.

• **COMMENT.** Amaral (1935) erected the genus *Calamodon* for *C. paucidens*, based on one specimen from Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. As the name was preoccupied by Cope (Ann. Chief Engineers U.S.A. App. F.F.3. 1874:593) for a genus of fossil mammals, in 1963 Amaral published the substitute name *Calamodontophis*.

***Calamodontophis paucidens* (Amaral 1935)**

Calamodon paucidens Amaral 1935:204. Type-locality, "Vila São Simão, Cacequi, Rio Grande do Sul (29°53'S; 54°49'W), Brasil" Holotype, Instituto Butantan, São Paulo (IB) 8847, an adult female, collected by O.M. Freitas sometime during November 1934.

Calamodontophis paucidens: Amaral 1963:580.

• **CONTENT.** No subspecies are recognized.

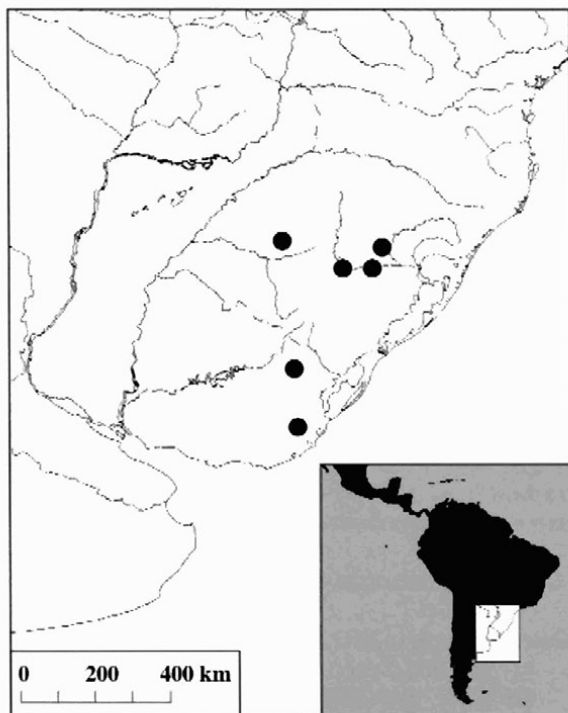
• **DEFINITION AND DIAGNOSIS.** See generic account.

• **DESCRIPTIONS.** Additional descriptions include Amaral (1963), Bailey (1966), Pagini and Lema (1987), Franco (1999), Franco et al. (2001), Carreira and Meneghel (2003), and Carreira et al. (2005). General descriptions are in Ferri and Soccini (2002),

and Achaval and Olmos (2003).

• **ILLUSTRATIONS.** Color photographs of living specimens are in Franco et al. (2001), Carreira (2002), Ferri and Soccini (2002), Achaval and Olmos (2003), and Carreira et al. (2005). Black-and-white photographs are in Carreira and Meneghel (2003). A color drawing is in Amaral (1977).

• **DISTRIBUTION.** *Calamodontophis paucidens* is known from localities situated in Rio Grande do Sul, in the Central Depression, between the Planalto Sul Rio-Grandense and the southern slopes of the Planalto Meridional do Brazil (Franco et al. 2001). In Uruguay, specimens were collected in open areas in Rocha and Treinta y Tres (see Map). Most of the specimens were found in very disturbed areas, such as gardens of houses and monocultures of pecan trees (*Carya illinoensis*) in Brazil and raygrass in Uruguay (Franco et al. 2001, Carreira and Meneghel 2003), but the available data are still insufficient to characterize the habitat of the species (Franco et al. 2001).



Map. Distribution of *Calamodontophis paucidens*. Dots indicate specimen records; the type-locality is too imprecise to plot.

Ferri and Soccini (2002) recorded this taxon from Chaco, Argentina, by mistake.

• **FOSSIL RECORD.** None.

• **PERTINENT LITERATURE.** Systematics is discussed in Amaral (1935, 1963), Bailey (1966), Cadle (1985), Franco (1999), Franco et al. (2001), Vidal (2002), Meneghel and Carreira (2003). Distribution is treated in Franco et al. (2001) and Carreira and

Meneghel (2003). Franco et al. (2001), Carreira and Meneghel (1999), and Meneghel and Carreira (2003) discussed behavior. Diet was characterized by Carreira (2002, no data reported). Prado-Franceschi and Hyslop (2002) mention *Calamodontophis* in a review of South American colubrid envenomation. Conservation status is discussed in Moura-Leite and Di-Bernardo (2000), Di-Bernardo et al. (2003), and Paglia et al. (2004). General works (field guides) include Ferri and Soccini (2002) and Achaval and Olmos (2003).

• **ETYMOLOGY.** The specific epithet *paucidens* is derived from the Latin words "pauc" (few, little), and "dent" (tooth), probably in reference to the comparatively low number of maxillary teeth.

• **REMARKS.** This species is poorly known, and more studies of anatomy, reproduction, food habits, and other subjects are needed. The phylogenetic relationships with other genera, such as *Tomodon*, need to be clarified. Franco (1999) proposed *Tachymenis paucidens* as a new combination. This species is very rare in collections (14 specimens are known to exist).

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